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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-12 EUR-12 CU-04 EA-10
/118 W
----------018055 011520Z /50
R 010951Z DEC 77 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
TO USINT HAVANA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6602
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 3863

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, MARR, CU, GV, SL
SUBJ: CUBAN ROLE IN SIERRA LEONE

REF: (A) HAVANA 712, (B) FREETOWN A-42

1. EMBASSY DOES NOT KNOW THE NUMBER OF POLICE OR MILITARY ADVISORS PRESENTLY IN SIERRA LEONE (REFTEL A). HOWEVER, CUBA HAS PROVIDED CONSIDERABLE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR THE PARA-MILITARY INTERNATIONAL SECURITY UNITS (ISU). ONE TRAINING CAMP ESTIMATED TO HAVE AT LEAST 10 CUBANS TRAINERS HAS OPERATED FOR OVER TWO YEARS AT JUI. FOLLOWING STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND WIDESPREAD RIOTING IN FREETOWN AND IN THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN PROVINCES IN FEBRUARY 1977, THE CUBANS OPENED A SECOND ISU TRAINING CAMP IN THE KAMBIA DISTRICT NEAR THE GUINEA BORDER. ABOUT 160 ISU TROOPS HAVE COMPLETED LONG TERM TRAINING IN CUBA AND A SECOND CONTINGENT OF ISE LEFT FOR CUBA IN AUGUST. PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THE RETURN OF THE FIRST ISU CONTINGENT FROM CUBA, MANY OF WHOM NOW SPEAK SPANISH, RUMORS CIRCULATED THAT BLACK CUBANS HAD BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE ISU. EMBASSY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE THESE

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RUMORS. THE RECENTLY ENLARGED ISU IS EQUIPPED WITH RUSSIAN MADE AK-47'S. ALTHOUGH NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS WAS MADE DURING THE YEAR, WE BELIEVE EITHER THE RUSSIANS OR CUBANS FURNISHED THESE ADDITIONAL WEAPONS AND ASSOCIATED AMMUNITION.

2. CUBA ALSO OPERATES A SMALL EXCHANGE PROGRAM MAINLY FOR

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YOUNG PEOPLE. ABOUT 20 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDY IN CUBA WERE AWARDED LAST YEAR. A CUBAN FRIENDSHIP DELEGATION VISITED IN FEBRUARY.

3. PRC AMBASSADOR CLAIMED IN MAY THAT 280 CUBANS WERE IN SIERRA LEONE. THIS SEEMS ABNORMALLY HIGH AND, IF TRUE, THE CUBANS ARE SO WELL CONCEALED THAT PEOPLE ARE NOT COMMENTING OPENLY ABOUT THEIR PRESENCE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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TAGS: MILI, MARR, CU, GV, SL
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